

Joe Pena feeds 450 people

A mariachi band composed of "Manuely Los Amigos" provided the atmosphere at Joe's Park Restaurant Monday while hundreds of San Angelo senior citizens dined on turkey, dressing and all the trimmings.

This was the third year Joe Pena of Joe's Park Restaurant, 2821 N. Chadbourne, has provided a free Christmas dinner to the elderly of San Angelo. Pena's employees donate their time, and much of the food is contributed by San Angelo businessmen.

By 2 p.m. 450 people had been served, the largest number ever for the event.

The parking lot was full, and a fleet of vans and station wagons were picking up and discharging elderly citizens as fast as

they could get in and out.

Transportation for the elderly was provided by volunteers of the North Angelo Lions Club, the Beta Sigma Phi sorority and others.

One of the diners, Ann Sholar of 6122 Spencer said "What Joe is doing is wonderful." Her friend, Evelyn Craft of 1008 Rio Concho Circle, Apt. 297, agreed that "The dinner was very good. Joe is to be commended for what he is doing for the elderly citizens of San Angelo."

Ruby Edwards of 732 W. 17th and Samantha Steward of 705 W. 14th both said this was their first time at the dinner, but "will not be the last."

Pauline Riley of 1925 Raney, Apt. 46 said she has been going to Joe's Park Restaurant since 1954. She said, "Joe is really a great guy for doing this."

A sign written by Pena when he started the free dinner three years ago and standing inside the door sums it up: "Life is short on earth, and time is needed to give thanks and share with friends the success of a year gone by. Some of our friends are financially limited, some live alone with little expectation of festivities, and to some Christmas is a burden."

"Our intention is to give of ourselves on this day and wish everyone a Merry Christmas."



Scene photo by Bruce Howell

SOME OF THE 450 PERSONS AT CHRISTMAS DINNER
...Joe's Park Restaurant continues tradition